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IC 74-2078
9 October 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Wilson

THROUGH:



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SUBJECT: Recent Issuance of Intelligence Alert
Memoranda: Possible Problems for ICS

1. I have before me two Intelligence Alert Memoranda which were sent to a high-level audience (including members of WSAG, Kissinger, and Schlesinger). One, on Cambodia, is dated 27 September; it was coordinated within the community. The other, on Portugal, is dated 4 October; it was not. Both pieces were produced under the aegis of the NIOs, and both carried cover memoranda signed by the Acting DCI. In form and substance, both also conform to guidelines first laid out in a D/OCI memo to the DCI which proposed the establishment of a system of Alert Memoranda.

2. The problem is that the DCI on 28 August referred the D/OCI's proposal to USIB for consideration, and USIB, while generally agreeing in principle, then charged IC Staff to establish an ad hoc committee to work out procedures for this new (and important) art form. We now find that, independently of this USIB action, and of further consideration by the ad hoc committee, CIA (in effect) has already moved ahead and begun to produce the new art form.* I am not sure that this is wrong--there is no necessary sin in proceeding in this fashion, and certainly the DCI has the authority to do so--but I am reasonably certain that some in the community will view all this as, at best, an "un-community" activity and, at worst, an effort by CIA to preempt a USIB-sanctioned approach to the vital problem of warning in general. (As you know, the relationship between an Alert

* Technically, since General Walters was at the time of issuance acting as DCI, and since the NIOs are supposed to act as community officers, these AM were not produced by CIA. But try to sell that to other elements in the community!



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Memoranda system and a revamped Watch Committee remains quite unsettled.)

3. I have talked about the Portuguese AM with [] the NIO for Western Europe. He informs me that, during the Acting Director's morning meeting a week or so ago, D/OCI (Dick Lehman) proposed that an Alert Memorandum on Portugal be produced by the NIO, and that General Walters then ordered that this be done. There was insufficient time to coordinate the piece before it was sent out-- that is, [] says, there was insufficient time to coordinate if the memo were truly to serve an alert function. The question of time available for coordination is of course a central issue: non-CIA members of the ad hoc committee emphasize the need for careful coordination; Lehman and the NIOs believe that the system must be sufficiently flexible to permit, when necessary, the issuance of AMs without coordination.

4. The Cambodian Alert Memorandum, we have learned, was generated by the NIO (following a suggestion from OCI analysts), and was approved in form (as an AM) by the DCI (as he was hastily leaving his office). It was coordinated in-house and then, mostly on the telephone, with DIA and INR. Some doubt and controversy arose during the in-house meeting about the nature and procedures of an AM. Small wonder.

5. In a sense, the problem here is only bureaucratic. [] makes the perfectly sensible point that consumers should be alerted whenever necessary, without reference to ongoing disputes within the community about procedures. But there is a question of principle at issue here too. USIB, on 12 September, asked the community ad hoc committee on Alert Memoranda to prepare an "implementing memorandum for USIB consideration." This does not sound like a charge to the NIOs to begin to implement the system immediately. And if the D/OCI and the NIOs and the DDCI were only interested in issuing timely "alerts," as [] suggests, they could have done so without using the proposed new (AM) system.

6. It's hard to say whether any real or lasting damage has been done by all this. Maybe not. But if community sensibilities

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have in fact been badly bruised, then we in ICS may find out tasks vis-a-vis the warning problem--already fairly difficult--complicated all the more.



Chief, PRD/IC

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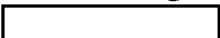
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